

Public Safety Information for Licensed Tour Guides

As a licensed tour guide in the City of Williamsburg, it is important to be familiar with basic public safety information. The following list is not all inclusive, but will be helpful as you guide groups through the historic district.

- In the event of an emergency, dial 911 on land-line telephones for police, fire and/or rescue. When using a cellular phone, dialing 911 will connect you with the State Police office in Chesapeake. Your call must then be transferred to Williamsburg 911. Best practice is to dial 220-2331 on your cellular phone for direct contact with the Williamsburg Public Safety Emergency Center. It is highly recommended that you program your phone to speed dial 220-2331. Also, guides should familiarize themselves with the locations of public phones within the restored area (see Travelers Companion Map).
- When calling for emergency assistance, it is important to know your general location. Major roadways in and around the restored area are noted on maps available from the City and the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation. Please be familiar with major cross streets in the event of an emergency. (Duke of Gloucester; cross streets Henry, Nassau, Botetourt).
- The State of Virginia has specific laws governing the safe crossing of pedestrians on public roadways. Pedestrians are required to cross at intersections and use crosswalks when available. You are encouraged to use the utmost caution when taking your tour group across roadways used by vehicular traffic.
- Buses that travel into the restored area will load and unload passengers at Waller Street near the Capitol, on Nassau Street near the Dewitt Wallace Museum, or on Prince George Street between Nassau and Henry Street. Parking, idling, standing, loading, and unloading on Francis Street is strongly discouraged. Tour buses are encouraged to park at the Visitors Center while groups are in the Historic Area.
- Licensed tour guides should be familiar with public vs private property issues. It is unlawful for any person without authority of law to go upon or remain upon the property of another after being forbidden to do so either orally or in writing (Virginia Code Section 18.2-119). Tour guides must be familiar with privately owned property within the Historic Area. Special attention must be given to areas that are posted as restricted areas. The grounds around the Powder Magazine, the Courthouse and the Palace Green are traditional thoroughfares for all visitors. Likewise, roadways and adjacent sidewalks are available for public use. Guides should check with the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, at 220-7375, regarding the status of any paths or walkways that may be in question. Guides must remember that when a private property owner requests that they leave the property, they must comply.
- All licensed tour guides must be familiar with the Williamsburg City Ordinance governing tour guide licensing. It is very important that licensed tour guides wear their license in plain view when conducting tours.